

Regional Meeting Report #6

Virginia State Preparedness Report (SPR) Project Regional Meeting, Region VI Kirkley Hotel Lynchburg, VA; Dec 6, 2007

For: Susan Mongold, OCP Program Manager
Info: Dave Hunt, CRA Program Manager
From: Sam McKinney, CRA Project Manager
Period: Dec 6, 2007
Project: A702-025

Purpose: The following information is presented in bullet format, by breakout group, without supporting comments and recommendations. The purpose of this report is to provide the program managers with a snapshot of the regions' current accomplishments and capabilities and the recommended targets and initiatives for the future.

The comments are presented without attribution to a particular agency or individual.

Enhance Regional collaboration:

Accomplishments and Capabilities:

- SMA – Statewide Mutual Aide
- EMAC
- Planning District Commission – 5th – Works with local governments – Roanoke Valley, Allegheny County – There are 21 Districts in Virginia.
- City of Danville – Piedmont Regional Interoperability Pilot Project. Virginia State Police, N.C. Highway Patrol, Pittsylvania County, Caswell County N.C., Halifax, town of South Boston. The regions change depending on what is happening.
- Community Partner meetings quarterly – Bedford City, Campbell County, other agencies and NGO's.
- (NGO) ARC – Region 2000 – Fire, State Police, schools.
- Public Safety and VOAD – 25-30 representatives meet regularly.
- DSHR – Disaster Services Human Resources – has been ongoing for sometime.
- Roanoke Urban Area – three (3) or four (4) counties and cities – Emergency Management meetings.
- Henry and Franklin County – West area – are working on regional data sharing network together. In the Southside – Southside Information Sharing Network.
- ATAC participation. Primarily a law enforcement information sharing network.
- VFC
- ROCIC (Regional Organized Crime Intelligence Center) – LE based system – Lends expertise and equipment. Emergency Management comprises only 5% of their jobs. Their funding comes from many sources. Pulled EOC into Emergency Management in the past.
- STARS – State Agency Radio System – On hold now. Problem now is

information coming down is not organized.

- PSIC – set aside 25 million dollars in Virginia. 18 million dollars went to localities. The state gets the remainder for their projects.
- Three (3) of five (5) requests were for radio improvement.
- Danville returns more money to the state than the state gives them.

Targets for 2010:

- Identify those localities/jurisdictions that are not participating with their neighbors in the region and why they are not participating.
- Give attention to the least funded areas.
- Develop a process for interoperability – need a basic framework to work with.
- Liaison between agencies and state is needed.
- Identify which agencies are operable. Not participating regionally.
- There is no infrastructure. The state needs to invest in wireless and fiber optics as a means to improve communication and collaboration and identify isolated areas.
- Need additional regional coordinators.

Initiatives/Steps

- Establish a regional educational outreach group to enhance citizen education.
- Educate both the formal and informal community leaders on preparedness issues.
- Form the committees and working groups to study the regions preparedness issues and make recommendations on steps for improvement or enhancement.
- Convince upper management of needs – prioritize preparedness issues.
- Bring outsiders in to hear pitch about advantages to spur on enhancements.
- Create Technical Assistance Teams.
- Subscribe to SilentPartnerAlert.com – Must be able to receive wireless.
- CodeRedWeb.com (tape a message) – sent to all in the area – Free.
- AChildIsMissing.com – (missing children, disabled) – Messages to geographical areas – Free.

Enhance Communication Capabilities:

Accomplishments and Capabilities:

- Police, Sheriffs Department and Fire Department can communicate.
- Some localities are able to communicate with other agencies on Mutual Aid System (schools, Public Works, EMS, etc.)
- Rescue, Fire, Police and Sheriff can communicate in Montgomery County.
- Pilot project using CISCO being done in Danville.
- IPICS – Internet Protocol Intercapability Communications System (has to work in conjunction with SIRS – Statewide Integrated Radio System).
- Server in Danville with routers which allow frequencies to be converted to fiber optic lines and allows various jurisdictions to communicate on various frequencies (not proprietary).
- Protocol to components cost fifty (50) thousand dollars.
- Statewide footprint – not fully operable to date.
- System is voice over IP and data storage is inexpensive. Allows for instant intercom.

- Citizens are notified via radio stations, news media, Reverse 911, Internet, cellular phone/pagers, siren blast, text messaging.
- Funding to implement Reverse 911 being requested in some areas.
- A Child Is Missing.Com – used for missing children and Alzheimer patients
- Silent Partner.com – (Lynchburg City) – allows citizens to sign up and they will be notified of emergencies, abductions, school closings, etc., through cell phone text messaging, pager notification, palm pilot, Internet only (not through IVR-Integrated Voice Response).
- IVR (Integrate Voice Response) – Voice out system alert to citizens.
- Bill stuffers through utilities bills is a means to notify citizens.
- Each jurisdiction works independently.

Targets for 2010 and Initiatives:

- What impact is the FCC Narrow Banding Regulations going to have?
- The county needs operability before we can move to interoperability.
- Rural counties need funding for operability to communicate via radio.
- Internet capability allows for multiple jurisdictions to have IP communications.
- No matter what radio communications you have, if you don't have the frequency it is not going to matter – Narrow Band Regulation takes effect in 2013.
- Little coordination on ACU Board System (similar to an old switchboard system).
- Someone needs to take a detailed look and analyze what everyone needs.
- An assessment needs to be made.
- Funding for someone to perform this function of analyzation and to follow through and deliver report of findings.
- Priorities need to be set by each locality/region not delegated by the state.
- STARS will be great for some localities but not for all. The same goes for Web EOC.
- Some places do not have internet service in their areas.
- Elevation can change by 2000 feet in some areas. This can be an issue.
- Public education is needed to alert citizens of what is available so they can be notified of disasters, emergencies, etc. What about the elderly?
- SCC can be critical resource in insuring the phone company is an alerting mechanism to citizens.
- Utilities can be major link to get info to citizens via the phone line.
- Duplicate processes already in place may need to be reviewed.
- Contracts between municipalities and phone companies may need to be established.
- Is the right of privacy being breached when using Reverse 911? (Legal issue).
- Allowing the GPS capability of cell phones to be identified and reversed as a means of communicating emergencies.
- Mandate a universal capability to alert citizens and make citizens responsible for applicable base fees.
- Determine type of notification versus how many need to be notified based upon the situation (power outage, bridge out, road block, etc.).
- IPICS – Internet Protocol Intercapability Communications System (Analog to digital and back to analog – works if you can get a signal).

- SIRS – Statewide Integrated Radio System – system needed if you want a statewide footprint.
- Subsets need to be developed.
- Relationships need to be developed at a local level with other surrounding counties.
- Regional boundaries, jurisdictions boundaries can be established, but who you deal with most matters.
- Can't define regions because they are always changing.
- Statewide initiative needs to be established and be flexible.
- Standardization to protocol is the key.
- Need support staff to assist in system development.
- Fund staff to write Grants, sustain and maintain Grants.
- VITA (Virginia Information Technology Agency) reps communicate amongst each other regionally.
- Basic State Emergency Plan needs to be implemented.
- Needs to be coordination of informational meetings on a weekly basis with VDEM, VDOT and other state offices.
- Have the state issue a broad mandate for localities/regions.
- Funding identified locally vs state funding.
- Project list and what is happening in regions across the state so info is shared (similar to training blogs used by various fire instructors across states).

Enhance CBRNE Detection, Response, and Decontamination:

Two other working groups - Planning and COOP, and Critical Resource Logistics and Distribution – joined this working group's discussion session.

Accomplishments and Capabilities:

- Region has established a local HAZMAT capability.
- The Region has a significant level of detection equipment.
- A significant amount of NIMS – ICS training has been completed.
- Region 2000 has been established locally.
- The Region has a significant decontamination capability at the regional hospitals and with portable decontamination units (trailers).
- The region has an extensive ongoing HSEEP compliant exercise program.
- The Region has created a USAR team in Lynchburg.
- The Region has created a Regional Public Information Network (PIN).

Targets for 2010 and Initiatives:

- Enhance vehicle borne IED response and hostage scene access to include the use of equipment trailers, site access issues, and training of personnel on the use of equipment.
- The state needs to reestablish a fixed-site HAZMAT training facility and increase the number of classes offered.
- Need support for jurisdictions to fund better exercise participation by units and personnel, both for overtime and backfill expenses and exercise costs
- Need state/region/local effort to help maintain training certifications.
- State agencies need to better coordinate their programs to minimize or avoid

- duplication of effort – meetings and inventories.
- The state and region should let counties and separate cities and towns establish their own regional partnerships within the existing regional structure.
- Implement plans and develop capabilities for citizen notification, evacuation, and sheltering, to include special needs population, pets, supplies and equipment, staffing and training.
- Develop and maintain a regional resource list and resolve typing issues, redundant requests, and provide access to the VEOC on-line logistics system.
- Federal and state funding should be based on needs – control UASI over funding.

Initiatives/Steps

- Create partnerships with private industry.
- Coordinate more with local military bases and organizations.
- Improve the level of personal preparedness through outreach and education.
- Enhance the number of volunteers and provide for their training.
- Include all appropriate agencies in training and exercises.
- Acquire and earmark funds to finish projects already in progress.
- To increase the funding for the State HazMat Program. The funding has not been increased for 20 years. Some localities have created teams and are interested in participating in the state program. With increased funding the state could offer more financial support to the regional teams and increased training.
- Lobby state for additional regional emergency management staffing.
- State should create guidelines for basic preparedness planning at the local level to include an SOP for EOC operations.
- “We don’t need more stuff, we need to be capable of maintaining what we have.”

Enhance Planning and COOP:

For this Regional Meeting, due to low participation, Enhance Planning and COOP was combined with two other groups – Enhance CBRNE and Critical Resource Logistics and Distribution.

Evacuation, Shelter-in-Place, and Mass Care (Shelter and Feeding):

Accomplishments and Capabilities:

Since 2002 what do you feel has been accomplished in your region related to preparing citizens for staying in place during an emergency and to provide shelter, food, or others services for those who must evacuate their home?

- Updated critical incidence response plans (review plans traffic management (reverse management) to meet community needs.
- Identified shelters for large numbers of people.
- Created threat level assessments for businesses, industries and hospitals identifying chemicals, HAZMAT and evacuation.
- Each state police division has a newly created HAZMAT team. These teams are the CCI teams, known as critical interdiction and counter terrorism teams which are fully equipped with decontamination, PPE, CBRN monitors, and 7 new vehicles for equipment and transportation.
- Seven (7) full time Public Information Officers
- Social services have employees on call 24 hours.

- Lynchburg Social Services has two employees taking Spanish classes in order to better communicate with Spanish speaking clients.
- Social Services have identified vets for pets.
- Social Services have monitored generators and emergency facilities at the Salvation Army, high schools and middle schools.
- Emergency services are on-site at Social Services.
- CRET teams in the Pittsylvania have been created.
- A mobile command post has been created in Pittsylvania.
- Mass care causality equipment has been purchased.
- Identified newly constructed middle school as a shelter and have installed generators.
- Updated critical incidence school policies and included emergency communications for all schools.
- Identified locations for potential terror threats.
- Virginia State Police has purchased PPE's and tivak suits w/24 hour filters for every employee.
- Roanoke emergency management coordinator has identified evacuation areas outside of the region.
- Roanoke emergency management coordinator has created a regional planning commission to develop evacuation plans, mass care for 7-10,000 people, identified schools for generators, focuses on special needs, children, pets and critical facilities.
- Roanoke emergency management coordinator has purchased reverse 911 and created lists of city employees, points of contacts, transportation plans.
- Roanoke emergency management has created/hired liaisons for emergency response.
- VA state police are trained in ICS and NIMS and have adopted STARS integrated radio communications.
- VA state police has eliminated codes and have adopted the plain talk policy.
- VA state police have updated plans for loss of personnel.
- VA state police have identified translators.
- Pittsylvania sheriff has adopted interoperability and strengthened communications with multi-jurisdictions.
- Pittsylvania Sheriff has monthly meetings with emergency stakeholders and key players.
- Hospital MHMHC have bought 2 emergency trailers.
- Hospital MHMHC has updated evacuation plans and a way to receive a large number of patients.
- Hospital MHMHC has required personnel to take NIMS and ICS training.
- Hospital has upgraded interoperability with local agencies and 1st responders.
- Hospital coordinates city and county training and drills.
- Hospital has upgraded surge capabilities and MOU's with private and public companies to serve critical needs.
- Hospital has on-site decontamination tent and equipment for minor casualties.
- Hospital has a portable facility in Roanoke to serve 25-30 patients.
- Lynchburg city schools have identified the newly constructed Middle School as

an emergency shelter by 2010.

- Lynchburg city schools have developed a crisis plan which includes reverse 9-11 and bus services during an emergency.

What objectives should be established to further citizen evacuation planning and readiness across your region by 2010?

- Harden for shelters and retrofit remaining shelters.
- Complete Evacuation Plan for Roanoke.
- Identify pet facilities.
- Identify and improve mass care capacities.
- Establish radio and operability communications.
- Become involved with NDMS.
- Improve capacity for mass care.
- Develop plans for transportation during evacuation.
- Identify way to communicate with and to citizens.

What steps need to be taken to accomplish each objective?

- Harden shelters and retrofit remaining shelters.
Retrofit shelters for quick connect.
Purchase additional generators.
Expand main shelter capabilities and services.
Assess satellite services for 1st responder families.
Provide support services and expand capabilities (cots, quick connect, food).
Develop mass care teams with volunteer and employees.
Develop a list of equipment and a plan to maintain it.
- Complete Evacuation Plan for Roanoke.
Develop committee of 10 or more people which includes the Dept. of Transportation, law enforcement, Public Works, school system, private interests.
- Identify pet facilities.
Assess lesson learned from Katrina.
MOU's with non-profits and veterinarians to manage for collection and care for pets.
Create public and private partnership for pets.
Mass education for pet owners and encourage owners to microchip their pets.
- Identify and improve mass care capacities.
Assess additional areas in hospitals for morgue and isolation.
Develop a MOU with private companies for mass care.
Purchase additional refrigerator units and hepa filters.
Purchase additional emergency supplies.
Create an MOU with the National Guard.
Additional mass care training.
Assess additional mass care facilities.
- Establish radio and operability communications.
Assess common frequency for agencies in the region.
Activate wider range of frequency and communication.
Expand interoperability and link communications with other agencies outside of the region.

- Become a NDMS patient receptor.
Tour and visit exiting NDMS facilities to see capabilities and system to adopt.
Work with regional airport commission and develop MOU.
- Develop plans for transportation during evacuation.
MOU for fuel with local government, private companies, National Guard, and private contractors.
Assess potential tow companies, bus companies, Liberty University, churches.
Assess whether or not a plan exists with schools for evacuating the community.
Outfit shelters in place with additional generators for fuel.
Identify special needs population for transportation.
- Identify ways to communicate with and to citizens.
Adopt Reverse 911 for citizens.
Examine school Reverse 911 system and emulate that system.
Implement siren and test quarterly.
Develop a website to educate citizens.
Develop a protocol to educate citizens.
Develop and expand a media co-op with emergency paging service, which lends messages to media outlets.
Identify translators for special needs population.

Critical Resource Logistics and Distribution:

For this Regional Meeting, due to participant interests, Critical Resources and Distribution was combined with two other groups – Enhance Planning and Coop, and Enhance CBRNE.